

CJ 325: Criminal Justice Theory (Spring 2010)

Paper #5: My Life of Crime

Due on Friday, April 23, 2009 by 12:00 p.m.

Throughout the semester, we have learned about a lot of theories and how they can be used to explain criminal behavior. In this paper, you are going to be asked to use these theories to explain your own disobedient, delinquent, or antisocial behavior. Remember:

“The purpose of this paper is to examine your own past activities in order to better understand the causes of your behavior and that of others. This is an educational exercise and in no way is to be seen as a confession that could in any way be used against you. Dr. Goodlin will be the only person that will see the results of this analysis. Please only discuss any events in your past which you feel comfortable.”

Your paper is to be divided into **FIVE** sections (please include each heading at the start of each section) and be at least **FOUR** pages long.

1. Confessions
 - a. Please describe in detail all of the “crimes” that you have “committed” from birth to the date this paper is due. Recall your earliest memory of disobedient, delinquent, or antisocial behavior.
 - b. You may find it entertaining to discuss these incidents with your parents, friends, and family members in order to gain a better perspective on how you behaved in earlier years.
2. Explanation
 - a. Please use your personal opinion to explain the factors or “causes” that contributed to your participation in these behaviors.
3. Theories of Causation
 - a. Please evaluate the factors you used in Section #2 and determine at least two criminological theories (that we have discussed in class) or perspectives within which your “explanations” (from Section #2) could potentially fit.
 - b. Please explain **in your own words** what each theory (that you chose) says about why criminal behavior occurs.
 - i. **DO NOT** take this word for word from your notes or a book. Cite properly!
 - c. Please explain in detail why you chose the theories that you did.
4. Response
 - a. Please discuss in detail what actions could have impacted (e.g. prevented them, decreased them, changed them) your participation in criminal, disobedient, delinquent, or antisocial behaviors you described above **AND** why you feel this way.
 - b. Please describe in detail what you believe may have happened to you if any of your “crimes” had resulted in you being incarcerated.
 - i. How would you have felt about this?
 - ii. How would this impact your family?
5. Conclusion
 - a. Please describe in detail what you have learned from participating in this assignment about:
 - i. Yourself **AND**
 - ii. Your own views of criminal, disobedient, delinquent, or antisocial behavior.